

BELMONT VISION IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES

April 8, 2010

Approved, 04/21/10

VIC Members Present: Tim Bowman, Jerome Dubois, Kevin Heine, Sara Masucci, Sara Oaklander, Paul Solomon

VIC Members Absent: Jennifer Page

Other Attendees: Joanne Coakley

Paul Solomon, VIC Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

- February 25, 2010 VIC meeting minutes were reviewed and unanimously approved with corrections.
 - Paul Solomon reported that Bruce MacDonald had respectfully resigned from the VIC and thanked him for his service.
 - Upcoming changes to the state open meeting law were discussed. VIC members Kevin Heine and Jennifer Page attended a March 30th presentation on the changes, which will become effective July 1, 2010. All VIC members agreed the changes were important and already substantially being implemented by the VIC.
- Tim Bowman provided a progress report on the “Budget and Taxes” initiative. Tim has purchased a web presence, Envision-Belmont.net, and is in the early stages of developing it. The goal is for the site to provide the public online archives of Envision Belmont’s Community Forums.

The first Envision Belmont Community Forum is scheduled for Sunday, October 24, 2010 from 4-8 p.m. at the Chenery Middle School. Belmont resident Wendy Rundle will be the facilitator and Jane Feinberg’s *Frameworks* materials will provide the meeting structure.

- Sara Masucci provided an update on the newspaper component of the “Budget and Taxes” initiative. Jane Feinberg will author the first newspaper article in what is expected to become a series of weekly “Envision Belmont” columns in the Belmont Citizens Herald that asks and presents individual Belmont residents about their concept of community, a time they’ve experienced a sense of community, and what can be done to ensure community in Belmont. Column answers will reportedly be limited by the Herald’s editor, Tony Schinella, to 70-80 words per answer.

The question was raised as to how the “Envision Belmont” column will be linked to budgets or taxes. There will be no direct link to either topic as the questions will all focus on “community”. The in-home/in houses of worship neighborhood conversations will focus more on budgets and taxes by centering discussions on defining the community that’s valued and possible disconnects between taxes and expected services. Each neighborhood conversation meeting will last

approximately 1.5 hours long. They will begin in May and continue through September and are expected to provide a preface to the fall Community Forum.

It was suggested that the VIC request Tony Schinella write an introductory piece on the neighborhood conversations to provide the general public information on them and what Envision Belmont hopes they will accomplish. A concern was raised that the neighborhood conversations and community forums need to be carefully described, both in print and voice, so they are not viewed as taking an already defined pro or con view on either budgets or taxes. It was agreed that this was an important point and unbiased descriptions would be developed and used in all communications.

Sara Masucci will prepare and distribute informational templates on the weekly column and neighborhood conversations to VIC members for further distribution to potential participants. It was noted that the locations for the neighborhood conversations and attendee demographics both need to be diverse in order to successfully connect with the entire Belmont community.

- Updates and Progress Reports
 - Meet Belmont: alternatives to the high school cafeteria location are still being considered.
 - 3 Town website: Sara Oaklander is working on categorizing the website's content for distribution to VIC members so they can provide input on how to make the site easier to use.
 - 3 Belmont Municipal Light Department substation: the VIC decided not to take any action on this issue.
 - Other Business
 - 3 Recognition of retiring Town Clerk, Delores Keefe: Paul Solomon will write a letter to recognize Delores on behalf of the entire VIC.
 - 3 Next meeting: will be scheduled for either Tuesday, April 20 or Wednesday, April 21

The meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Heine
Secretary Pro Tempore